

Amendments to the Specification:

Page 1, before line 4, insert the following title and paragraph:

PRIORITY CLAIM

This is a national stage application under 35 U.S.C. §371 of international stage PCT application No. PCT/FI00/00860, filed on October 05, 2000. Priority is claimed under 35 U.S.C. §119(a) and 35 U.S.C. §365(b) from Finnish Patent Application No. 19992148, which was filed in Finland on October 05, 1999, and from which priority was properly claimed in the aforementioned international stage application.

Delete the paragraph and header on page 1, before line 6, which was inserted in the Second Preliminary Amendment dated December 20, 2002.

Delete the paragraph on page 3, on line 6, starting with "The method according to the invention..."

Page 3, line 20, the paragraph beginning with "According to the", please replace the paragraph with the following amended paragraph:

According to the invention, the sequence of data to be encoded at a transmitting end is split into at least two blocks, if the sequence is longer than a first predetermined length M. The splitting is performed so that the length of the data portion in the first block is equal to the first predetermined length M. If the remaining sequence is shorter than a second predetermined length N, the second block comprises all of the remaining sequence. If the remaining sequence is longer than the second predetermined length N, the length S of the data portion in the second block is found by subtracting from the length of the remaining sequence the highest integer multiple of the second predetermined length, and the rest of the sequence is split into blocks of length N. If the sequence is shorter than the first predetermined length M, only one block is produced, and the sequence is padded with dummy values to form a sequence of length M. If the sequence is exactly M units long, the first and in that case the only block comprises the whole sequence. The blocks are then separately encoded with the desired coding function.

Page 3, line 35, the paragraph beginning with "In this description", please replace the paragraph with the following amended paragraph:

In this description, an ~~[the]~~ indication of the length of the data sequence to be coded is assumed to be present in the beginning of the sequence, for example as a predetermined number of bytes indicating the total length of the sequence including the length indication. Such a sequence can naturally be produced from any data sequence to be transmitted by calculating the length of the sequence, adding to the length the length of the length indication, and prepending the result to the sequence. The indication of the total length is ~~[comprised]~~ in the first block, which allows the decoding of the coded blocks by the receiver. Since the first block is of a predetermined size, it can be decoded directly. The total length of the data sequence is ~~[observed]~~ determined from the contents of the first block, and by reversing the calculation used to determine the amount and lengths of the rest of the blocks in the transmitting end, the receiver can determine the lengths of the following blocks, and therefore is able to correctly receive and decode them.

Page 5, line 16, the paragraph beginning with "In the beginning", please replace the paragraph with the following amended paragraph:

In the beginning, it is checked 100 if the length of the data sequence to be transmitted is smaller than the predefined limit M. If it is, padding symbols are added 105 to the sequence to make the length to be exactly M, ~~[whereafter]~~ and the resulting data block is encoded 110 and transmitted 115. If the length of the data sequence is not smaller than M, it is checked 120 if the length equals M. If it does, the sequence is encoded 110 and transmitted 115.

Page 5, line 29, the paragraph beginning with "If the length", please replace the paragraph with the following amended paragraph:

If the length of the data sequence was not found to be equal to M in step 120, the sequence is longer than M, ~~[wherefore]~~ and, therefore, more than one transmission block will be needed. For this end, the length S of the second block is calculated in step 125 and the number F of further blocks is calculated in step 130.